

U.S. SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION
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From Nebraska SBA District Office – 8(a) Business Development Program

“ARE YOU READY TO APPLY FOR 8(A) CERTIFICATION?”

Please direct persons interested in 8(a) certification to this web address:

<http://www.sba.gov/aboutsba/sbaprograms/8abd/application/index.html>

The 8(a) Business Development Program

We are pleased to provide you with information on the application process for certification in the 8(a) Business Development Program. The program provides eligible firms with greater access to the resources they need to grow and develop their businesses. This, in turn, improves their ability to compete on an equal footing with other firms in the mainstream American economy.

Applying On-Line for 8(a) BD Program Certification:

8(a) Business Development Suitability Tool: Prior to applying for the 8(a) Program, each firm is urged to take an on-line training and self-evaluation course, which is accessible via the following link:

<http://training.sba.gov:8000/assessment>

The first section of the on-line course explains the 8(a) Program in detail. It culminates in an eligibility self-assessment test. The test consists of a series of simple yes/no questions that evaluate the degree to which your firm meets the basic qualifications for the 8(a) Program. If you meet the basic eligibility criteria, you will be allowed to apply immediately for the 8(a) Program via the electronic on-line system. If key eligibility criteria are not met, you will be directed to the SBA resource deemed most appropriate to help you at this time. If you would still prefer at this time to apply using the electronic system, please send an e-mail to BDMIS@sba.gov for further guidance and assistance. The average processing time for an electronic application is ninety days.

In addition, please be sure to read *“What You Should Know When Applying for 8(a) Business Development Program Certification”*. This document can be viewed at:

http://www.sba.gov/aboutsba/sbaprograms/8abd/application/8ABD_WHEN_APPLYING.html

Click on this link for access to the **electronic application**: <http://training.sba.gov:8000/assessment>

To the prospective applicant to the 8(a) Business Development Program:

Please read this important notice before applying!!!

Before applying for certification in the 8(a) program, take this final opportunity to carefully review the items below: These are the most common reasons for decline of 8(a) applications. If you or your firm does not meet the criteria in the items explained below, please carefully consider whether you should submit your application for the 8(a) BD Program at this time.

Social Disadvantage:

- If you are not a member of a designated group - Black American, Native American, Sub-Continent Asian American, Hispanic American or Asian/Pacific Islander American - you must make an individual case for social disadvantage based upon a preponderance of the evidence. Please review the Preponderance of Evidence definition. Your narrative statement must be detailed and, where possible, supported by documentation in order to meet the preponderance of evidence standard.

Economic Disadvantage:

- Individual net worth must be below \$250,000 after the individual share of equity in the primary residence and equity in the business are deducted.
- Individuals with an average Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) in excess of \$200,000 on their two most recent personal Federal tax returns may not be found to be economically disadvantaged.

Individuals claiming disadvantaged status must be found to be both socially AND economically disadvantaged.

Full Time:

- The individual upon whom eligibility is based must devote full time to the business at the time of application during normal business hours of the firms in the same or similar line of business (Generally 8 AM to 5 PM, Monday through Friday). If you have full time outside employment or manage another business, full time devotion will be an issue and may be a reason for decline.

Potential for Success:

- A firm must demonstrate potential for success. SBA will review operating capacity, track record of performance on contracts of the size and scope awarded under the 8a program and financial capacity. Large operating losses and deficit working capital and net worth positions would make it difficult for the firm to meet potential for success criteria. Additionally, if the firm has generated minimal revenue, SBA may determine the firm would be incapable of successfully performing on larger government contracts.
- TWO YEAR RULE: 8a criteria requires that the firm be operational for two full years as verified by revenues in the primary industry as reported on Federal business tax returns for the preceding two year period. A waiver to the two year rule may be granted; however, you must address each element of the waiver criteria in detail, and provide copies of contracts and letters of reference to verify successful contract performance. If the firm has not generated any revenue or has had limited revenues, you will be unable to waive the two-years-in-business rule.

Critical License:

- If a non-disadvantaged individual holds the critical license for the firm's industry and that individual is an officer, director or shareholder of the firm, SBA can find potential for negative control.

Thank you. If you still feel you may qualify for the 8(a) Program, please click on the link below to be taken to the electronic application for the program.

<https://sba8a.symlicity.com/applicants/guide>

Guide for New 8(a) Applicants – THE LINK ABOVE TAKES YOU TO THE GUIDE. Please download and print the guide for your reference. It is a step-by-step guide to the 8(a) certification application process.

8(a) Certification

Welcome to the new internet-based system designed to help you organize and complete the materials required to obtain certification in the 8(a) Business Development Program. By following the directions closely, you will provide the SBA with the information it needs to process your application in the least amount of time. It has been designed to guide your efforts in a logical and intuitive manner. Moreover, if you don't use this system to complete and submit your application, you risk long processing delays, as the SBA manually processes your application.

The Electronic Application Process

This new web-based interface provides step-by-step instructions to enable you to organize complete and submit your application for 8(a) Business Development Program certification to the SBA in the least amount of time. Please note that, while an electronic record of your input to this system is retained by the agency, you must still provide hard-copy proof for the SBA to verify your claims.

The steps of the process:

To do business with the Federal government and to be certified under the 8(a) Program, you *must* [register in the Central Contractor Registration \(CCR\)](#) database, and complete the Small Business Supplemental Page within CCR. As a government-wide single point of vendor registration, CCR is a key aspect of streamlining and integrating electronic commerce into the Federal procurement process. Effective October 1, 2003, Federal Acquisition Regulation require contractors to register in CCR prior to award of any contract, basic agreement, basic ordering agreement, or blanket purchase agreement. It's easy to register in CCR. Just go to www.ccr.gov and select the **Start a New Registration** button.

Please read before you proceed:

If you are a new registrant to CCR and/or updating your profile in CCR, you may experience a 24 to 72 hour waiting period before you are given access to the 8(a) Business Development Program electronic certification system, as the databases in the two systems synchronize. We apologize for any inconvenience this may cause.

You must also [register for an account in the SBA's General Log-in System](#) (GLS). GLS provides a single log-in point for all services of the SBA. This streamlines and simplifies service delivery to our clients. It's simple to [register for an account](#). This is a secure site: **HTTPS**
https://eweb.sba.gov/gls/dsp_addcustomer.cfm?imappsystypnm=8ASDB

[Log-in](#) to the 8(a) Business Development Program electronic certification system via SBA General Log-in System (GLS). https://eweb.sba.gov/gls/dsp_login.cfm?

[8\(a\) Business Development Program Electronic Certification System User Guide:](#)

Complete and submit a completed electronic application, following the step-by-step directions provided by the system. A detailed user manual is also available to download and print via this link:

https://sba8a.symlicity.com/downloads/BDMIS_UserGuide.pdf?SBASESSID=27f249aeb11c4689d708e89afcdcf20b

Also, you must mail in signed hard-copy versions of all required forms, as well as all required supporting documentation outlined in the 'Checklist' provided by the system.

The length of time for the SBA to review your application and arrive at a decision depends on the complexity of your application. Regulations stipulate a time-frame of ninety days to process an application from the time it is deemed complete by the SBA. So it is in your best interest to ensure that the package you mail in to the SBA contains all the required information and documentation, or processing delays could result. We will, of course, do our best to process your application and render a decision as quickly as possible.

On Eligibility

We highly recommend that prior to applying for certification; you take the [on-line training course](#) on SBA certification. The training course which will answer many elementary eligibility questions is available at:

<http://training.sba.gov:8000/assessment>

Application Information Privacy

The information submitted as part of your electronic application is protected by a username/password based authentication system for all system interactions that require authorization. All authentication related system interaction will be protected using secure, encrypted communications (SSLv3 with 128-bit encryption) to ensure that system passwords cannot be detected by network intruders. SSL is the industry standard for secure network communications. For further information regarding SBA's Internet Privacy Policy please contact BDMIS@sba.gov.

False Statements

Please make sure that your answers are truthful and accurate and submitted by you as there are serious legal consequences for falsifying information in an 8(a) Program application. These may include fines, imprisonment or both.

SBA Hotline Assistance
Electronic-Application Hotlines

8(a) E-application assistance e-mail address:

- If you are having difficulty with SBA's General Login System (GLS), please contact ITSecurity@sba.gov.
- If you are having difficulty with the Central Contractor Registration (CCR), please go to <http://www.ccr.gov/help.asp> for contact information.
- 8(a) Business Development E-application, please contact BDMIS@sba.gov.

You may also email any questions or concerns surrounding your 8(a) Program application to BDMIS@sba.gov

FIRST TIME GLS (General Login System) Registration:

https://eweb.sba.gov/gls/dsp_addcustomer.cfm?imappsystypnm=8ASDB

Cut and paste this secure web site into your web browser. If you have any questions, click on the 'HELP' link in the upper left hand of the page.